

I write today to urge the Commission to deny the attempt of the MPAA and major Hollywood studios to increase their stranglehold on the already diminishing fair-use rights of consumers. In today's electronic age, the presence of digital recording devices, and their subsequent use on "high-value" content is inevitable. The paranoia that is clearly shown in the actions of the MPAA will do little, if anything, to prevent the recording of media.

For example, the MPAA and Studios claimed repeatedly during the introduction of VHS technology that personal recording of media would destroy the industry, insisting that this copying was illegal. Over a decade later, the studios are still in business.

Now, the studios are back for round two. Having failed to achieve the limits they sought in the 1990s, they see a possible answer in digital technology. With its versatility, the repercussions of limiting the copying and recording of media using digital technology are profound and potentially disastrous. This is especially true with proposed legislation on the horizon limiting analog outputs on digital devices.

Let's not let paranoia and senseless limiting of fair-use rights dictate the consumer. The studios do not own consumers. Likewise, consumers do not own the programming. A balance must be sought, but throttling fair use would tilt the scale significantly in the direction of the studios, depriving consumers of legitimate rights.